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INFO. FOR YOU

Structures dialogue...getting quantities of "Services Available"... more on electronic news distribution...big "fair" in D.C.... recruiting and hunting...a bit on visitors...and getting more scientific information into public policymaking. You'll find these items, and maybe more, in this week's issue.

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GET READY... POLICY CHANGES COMING

When Secretary Bergland addressed the National Farmers Union convention March 12 in Kansas City, he said he hoped to initiate a full-scale national dialogue on agricultural structures. You've probably read about it...and response has been widespread from diverse groups.

If you haven't read the speech, call or write the Press Division, GPA. You'll be hearing more about the issue...Charles Brannan, a former Secretary of Agriculture, has called it "the most important speech by a Secretary...in over two decades."

Most often mentioned regarding structure are the number and sizes of farms. But that's not all. Other aspects include tenure, age of farm operators, type of farm and geographic location, legal form or organization (single ownerships, partnerships, corporations and cooperatives), marketing arrangements, ownership and control of resources, sources of capital, freedom of individuals in decisionmaking...the list goes on and on.

Two major reasons for the interest in the structure of the farming sector are (1) economic performance and (2) questions of objectives, ideals, values and goals--the area in which questions of culture, tradition, population and income distribution and rural ways of life are raised.

Yes, these are issues that have been talked about before. What's new now is the intense interest being generated...and the growing recognition of their importance to everyone involved in agriculture, including producers and consumers. As a result, the possibilities are high that a full-fledged policy may develop.

Keep tuned..."Inside..." will bring more details as they develop, because information folks will have a role--and a growing one at that.

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"BULK" ORDERS NOW OK

Some time ago we mentioned a brochure called "Services Available Through the U.S. Department of Agriculture." Response was heavy...GPA had to reprint.

Now we have a new batch. If you in the field want quantities, write Bill Whyte, GPA, Special Reports. He can fill orders up to 200.

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WHAT'S THAT AGAIN?

How would you like to have the title "Head of the Department of Information and Agricultural Journalism and Program Leader for Extension Communication and Educational Aids"? Maybe the best way to address the new owner of that title would be merely, "Dear Don."

We're talking about Don Wells. He'll move to the Univ. of Minn. on or before August 1 and will hold the title above.

Don, most of you will recall, is a professor with the Department of Communications at Wash. State. He spent much of last year in D.C. on an exchange assignment. Some years ago he taught at Iowa State, was with the National Project in Agricultural Communications, and before that was agricultural editor at the Univ. of Rhode Island. We welcome Don back to agriculture.

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MORE DISTRIBUTION
BY COMPUTER

Eldon Fredericks at Mich. State writes that on April 11 his operation provided outside media users with the necessary codes to search and retrieve MSU releases stored on computer.

One state capitol newspaper bureau office has access to the system and feeds eight Michigan newspapers. Another user is a farm radio network with daily feeds to about 50 radio stations.

Eldon's information group has been developing the program for the past 6 months. Along with ag economist (Stephen Harsh) and grad assistant (Ed Rister), Eldon and Deb Vergeson have put together a computer storage of releases. Media outlets can retrieve any release by searching for a subject of interest or by searching everything on the system from a specified date.

The system transmits a description of the stories, an abstract when requested, or the complete text. Media can enter the data into their own computer system and edit or add to as they wish before going directly to typesetting...all without re-keyboarding copy.

The system will be demonstrated at the NC ACE meeting May 2-4. There also, Dan Lutz, Univ. of Neb., will describe and demonstrate the use of a computer terminal to send info. directly into newspapers' systems.

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IN ON THE ACT...

A few issues ago "Inside..." ribbed a new buzzword or phrase... "appropriate community technology." On April 27-30, ACT '79 will be held in the Reflecting Pool area of the Mall in D.C. ACT '79 is a fair...called formally, Appropriate Community Technology Fair for 1979. (So much for poking fun.)

The fair is sponsored by government and a broad coalition of consumer, labor, church, environmental, agricultural, business

and educational groups. Principal focus of the fair is to demonstrate "appropriate technologies," old and new, that will enhance individual family and community self-reliance.

Plainly speaking, demonstrations will include canning vegetables, solar energy and its use in agriculture, how to raise fish in ponds, and gardening techniques. Lectures also are planned on measuring wood, identifying brucellosis in swine, growing vegetables and applying for a Farmers Home Administration loan... among other things.

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PENN STATE TRAVELERS

Penn State's Glenn Goss spent a day in D.C. recently and dropped by "Inside's..." offices. He mentioned that Cordell Hatch, also of Penn State, had just departed for the Seychelles Islands where he'll work on television linkage between the island group. Cordell will be there for a 6-month tour...working out of the Embassy in Nairobi.

We wondered where the islands are...and about their pronunciation. Turns out they're northeast of Madagascar. No, we can't turn Seychelles into "seashells," because it's pronounced like "sayshells."

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JOB AT IOWA STATE

Ned Disque, Iowa State, sends an announcement of a vacancy...a first-rate job for someone with the right interests and qualifications, he writes.

It's for an information specialist who will work on research activities in ag and home ec to explain activities to the general public, community and organization leaders and public officials... prepare news releases, plan and develop popular publications on research, plan and prepare other information materials, provide info to individuals working in the general and specialized news media.

Required are a Baccalaureate degree...evidence of previous experience and success in public communication...ability to communicate scientific information in lay language...basic understanding and interest in agriculture and ag research. Preferred are an advanced degree in ag or communication or both and 3 years or more of experience in ag comm. Deadline for applications, May 7.

If interested, write N. E. Disque, 109 Morrill Hall, Iowa State, Ames 50011 or call him at (515) 294-4777.

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HUNTING FROM ARIZONA

Recent graduate from Northern Arizona Univ., Paul A. Forrest, 104 Kenwood Pl., Lynchburg, Va. 24502 (phone: 804 239-1693), seeks employment in telecommunications. He majored in that subject and specialized in TV production and direction.

...AND FROM YALE

Debbie Rosenberg, '79 candidate for a BS in combined sciences with a concentration in biology from Yale Univ., is looking for a spot as a science writer, editor, or reporter-researcher. Her address presently is 4247 Yale Station, New Haven, Conn. 06520, phone: (203) 432-1208; her permanent address is 65-16 Utopia Parkway, Fresh Meadows, N.Y. 11365, phone: (212) 445-7371.

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VACANCIES ANYONE?

On employment possibilities, Herb Jackson, Chicago AMS office, indicated the other day that he and Jim Evans, Univ. of Ill., had been wondering about USDA info. jobs for which youngsters might apply...and for which folks with several years experience might apply. That prompts "Inside..." to ask agencies to let us know when vacancies come up so "Inside..." can help spread the word.

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MORE ON POLICY NEEDS

While reading through the SEA-CR administrator's letter the other day, we noticed that Ray H. Coppock, Univ. of Calif. at Davis, reported on scientist-legislative discussions about getting more scientific information into public policymaking.

Ray pointed out that the participants--at a recent conference on water policy--said that public hearings don't often provide much objective information. Policymakers need other sources of unbiased facts...and they need them fast. Some suggested a scientific information service so researchers can be on call to provide data and opinions. Others pointed out that no single scientist should be expected to speak for his organization...a collection of researchers with often differing viewpoints.

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PROCUREMENT SECTION
CURRENT SPECIAL RECORDS

What's wanted are opportunities to develop personal contacts... more emphasis on disseminating research results to legislators and other policymakers. Ray's group wanted to encourage more responsiveness to their information needs. One spokesman said, "We need a whole new arrangement...to anticipate policy information needs and try to meet them ahead of time."

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AILMENTS RAMPANT?

Either there's an epidemic loose or we're all just getting older, for too many folks have been hospitalized lately to warrant a simple "no comment." Recent cripples include Ben Blankenship, ESCS; Mason Miller, SEA-CR; Larry Marton, GPA; and probably a few others we've not heard about. Latest to join the sick list are Nelson Robinson, ASCS, and Jim Johnson, GPA. We wish them well.

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UPCOMING TRAVEL

Some travel plans of USDA's top staff include:

April 30--Under Sec. Dale Hathaway, Fed. Bar Assoc. Seminar on U.S.-China Trade, San Francisco.

May 2--Asst. Sec. Carol Foreman, Walter Bagehot Fellowship Pgm., Columbia Univ., New York.

May 3--Asst. Sec. Rupert Cutler, Guayule Commission, Tucson.

May 3-4--Asst. Sec. Carol Foreman, Monell Chem. Senses Center, Philadelphia, and Nutrition Conference, New York.

May 3--Dir. Howard Hjort, Natl. Broiler Council, Myrtle Beach, S.C.

May 8--Sec. Bob Bergland, Council of Foreign Relations, Chicago.

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REGIONAL PLAN COMING

Tentatively, USDA regional task force chairman Stan Prochaska, AMS, will report the final plans for regional USDA information offices at the April 30 meeting of all agency info. heads. While the plans complete the task force assignment, agencies will have opportunity to help develop workable approaches over a period of time. More later....